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"Beside the Still Waters: Reflections on the Book of Psalms, illustrated by parallel verses from other portions of the Scriptures." By LADY SIMON. London, 1899.

THE interest and value of this small volume lie greatly in certain inferences which the reader is justified in making as regards the character of its authoress. There is, indeed, not much original writing in it. The greater part is taken up with quotations of "parallel verses from other portions of the Scriptures." These parallels show a remarkable familiarity with every section of the Hebrew Bible. They are obviously not the result of the concordance, but of prolonged and repeated reading and of loving recollection. Useful and suggestive as they are, the reader will not be able to suppress the wish that Lady Simon should have given us rather more of her own feelings and views about the Psalter. What we do get makes us sorry that we have not more.

The perfect simplicity of the gifted authoress's words is the proof of their absolute good faith. And herein lies their value. Here we have a true spiritual testimony. The highest and purest elements of the Psalter have been absorbed by the writer; they have been personally and individually appropriated. Such is the religion which Judaism can produce. "Such is the religion": because, after all, religion, like philosophy, is, in one deep sense, a state of mind. Apart from religious individuals, religion on earth has hardly an existence. The test of a religion, nay even its very reality, is not a book or code, but the individuals who are partly created by it and partly themselves continue and determine its life. The most spiritual utterances of the Psalmist have only latent or potential life. They live in human souls.

It is but natural that the scholar will detect a certain amount of what the Germans call *Hineinlesen* in Lady Simon's reflections. But this does not matter in the least; it is on the contrary delightful to see how much the authoress can discover in Psalms which to a less fervently spiritual mind seem of smaller interest or value. Thus, e.g., she writes about Psalm vii:—

"The study of this Psalm is very important, because much of the sufferings of life arises from the false judgments of our fellow-men; but there is a judgment for each one of us, beyond the reach of human sight, seen only through the light of God's countenance, penetrating our inner life, so that those who trust in God will not be crushed in spirit, but will rise to the knowledge of God, and will rest in the Lord."

These words are clearly no copybook utterance; they are the record of experience. Now of course nature goes for much; one man is born with greater spiritual capacity and another with less. Environment and education again go for much. Some have good opportunities for spiritual development; others have meagre opportunities or none at all. But after every allowance has been made, a certain amount remains (as in other departments of life) within our own power and control. And we may suppose that the spiritual faith of our authoress was not reached all at once, but that it is the gradual result of a pure life, of strenuous deeds, of habitual prayer, of determined cultivation. Faith needs tending.

Many of us dimly understand that communion with God is the best means wherewith to strengthen our faith; we know also that this communion is faith's expression or evidence. Therefore we are helped by the simple words of one to whom that communion has been unquestionably a reality. "Human resolves for good may fail us unless quickened by means of direct communion with God." Religion "quickens" morality. Lady Simon indeed, if I may say so, seems ever on the watch where she can perceive in the Psalter the record of that complete faith in God, which she also calls "personal consecration to God" or "the perfect conception of the soul's union with God." Still she recognizes differences of degree, and she is perhaps right when, in dealing with the sixty-third Psalm, she says, "It seems to bring us to the high-water mark of the spiritual genius of the Bible."

As the conviction forces itself upon the attentive reader that whatever Lady Simon *does* say is her own in the truest sense of the word, we gather from an occasional hint that her faith in God has been tested and confirmed by suffering. "We are brought to God by suffering. This theory, that has been emphasized by all our teachers of old, solves many a difficult problem of life upon earth." The "discipline of affliction" can bring us nearer to God. "The best people are more often tried than others, but the 'righteous Lord loveth righteousness.' The Divine purpose is, therefore, one of discipline; this theory is in harmony with the teaching of Moses and all the prophets."

The Bible and her own life have both seemed to confirm and quicken our authoress's belief in the assured existence of a loving God. Thus she finds in Psalm xlii. 9 an allusion to "the comforting influence of the Divine countenance that beams with infinite love and sympathy." She holds that to the writer of the twenty-fifth Psalm, "belief in forgiveness of sin rests upon his conception of God's infinite love." And she ventures upon a quaint but beautiful inter-

pretation of Psalm xxiv, insisting (as she herself in experience has found) that "by the development of our spiritual life with God, the soul becomes reunited with God in love (divine and human), and recognizes the 'everlasting doors,' and shall receive 'the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.'"

In fine, one might say of this writer, (and herein, let me say it again, lies the beauty and the value of her book), what she herself has said of the thirty-fourth Psalm: she "is absolutely full of hope: the result of the soul's victory over every depressing condition of mortal life." She "tells the personal experiences of her life with God in the world."

C. G. MONTEFIORE.

KRENGEL'S "HAUSGERÄTH IN DER MISHNAH."

Das Hausgeräth in der Mishnah, von Dr. JOHANN KRENGEL. I. Teil. pp. 68, 8vo. J. Kauffmann: Frankfurt a. M., 1899.

THE little book is the first part of a larger study on Mishnic philology and archaeology, and it is therefore probable that the author intends supplementing the same with the chapters still missing. The term *Hausgeräth* is somewhat indefinite. The author has actually in this instalment only treated on the Mishnic vocabulary for the furniture of sitting and bedrooms, his work being chiefly a linguistic one. Now if all the expressions used in the O. T. and those of undisputed Greek, Latin, Arabic, and Persian origin are set apart, little remains for the purpose of establishing a Jewish archaeology in the epoch of the Mishnah. How largely Jewish culture was influenced by foreign elements at this epoch may be gathered at a glance from the list of works on Greek and Roman culture which the author had to consult. His work is nevertheless a scholarly and comprehensive compilation of the terms actually used in the Mishnah (and cognate scripts) for domestic utensils. He has, indeed, in numerous cases coped successfully with the enormous difficulties of his task. It is particularly satisfactory that he is very careful in his etymologies, a point often missed in dictionaries and books of reference on this subject. The ground is extremely slippery, chiefly in regard to foreign terms, which have been put down in writing after a prolonged verbal use, their orthography therefore frequently being disfigured beyond recognition. Dr. Krenzel is obviously right in not forcing etymologies, where a plausible one is not as yet forthcoming, e.g. in לִבְיִי (p. 7). Is there perhaps